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RANKED #1
IN OKLAHOMA FOR
ECONOMIC MOBILITY
BY THIRDWAY





OKLAHOMA
PANHANDLE STATE
UNIVERSITY

P.O. Box 430
Goodwell, OK 73939
Tel: 580-349-2611
Toll Free: 1-800-664-OPSU
Fax: 580-349-2302



@ **wearepanhandle**

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Julie Dinger — University President
Dr. Theresa Billiot — Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs
Dr. Ryan Blanton — Vice President of Advancement
Liz McMurphy — Vice President of Fiscal Affairs

PANHANDLE MAGAZINE

Natasha Eidson — Director of Campus Communications
Lauren McBee — Marketing Coordinator

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Natasha Eidson — Lauren McBee — Kyrstan Cook — Kenzie Monroe
Laryn Dejarnett — Aaron Witt — Kendal Smartt — Daya Cruz Murillo

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RANKED #1

IN OKLAHOMA FOR ECONOMIC MOBILITY BY THIRDWAY

Oklahoma Panhandle State University proudly announces its outstanding achievement in being ranked No.1 in Oklahoma on the Economic Mobility Index, a prestigious ranking system provided by ThirdWay.org. This Tier 1 ranking places OPSU among the elite colleges that rank within the top twenty percent for economic mobility, solidifying its commitment to delivering strong economic mobility outcomes for its students.

The Economic Mobility Index, created by ThirdWay.org, is a comprehensive assessment of how effectively higher education institutions help students advance economically. The index considers many factors, including graduation rates, earnings outcomes, and access to Pell Grants for low-income students. OPSU's Tier 1 ranking highlights the university's dedication to providing a world-class education that empowers its students to excel financially.

One of the key factors contributing to OPSU's remarkable success in the Economic Mobility Index is the university's unwavering support for Pell Grant students. Forty-two percent of OPSU's student population receives Pell Grants, ensuring that higher education remains accessible and affordable for a diverse range of individuals.

University President Dr. Julie Dinger remarked, "Achieving Tier 1 status on the Economic Mobility Index shows how Panhandle State

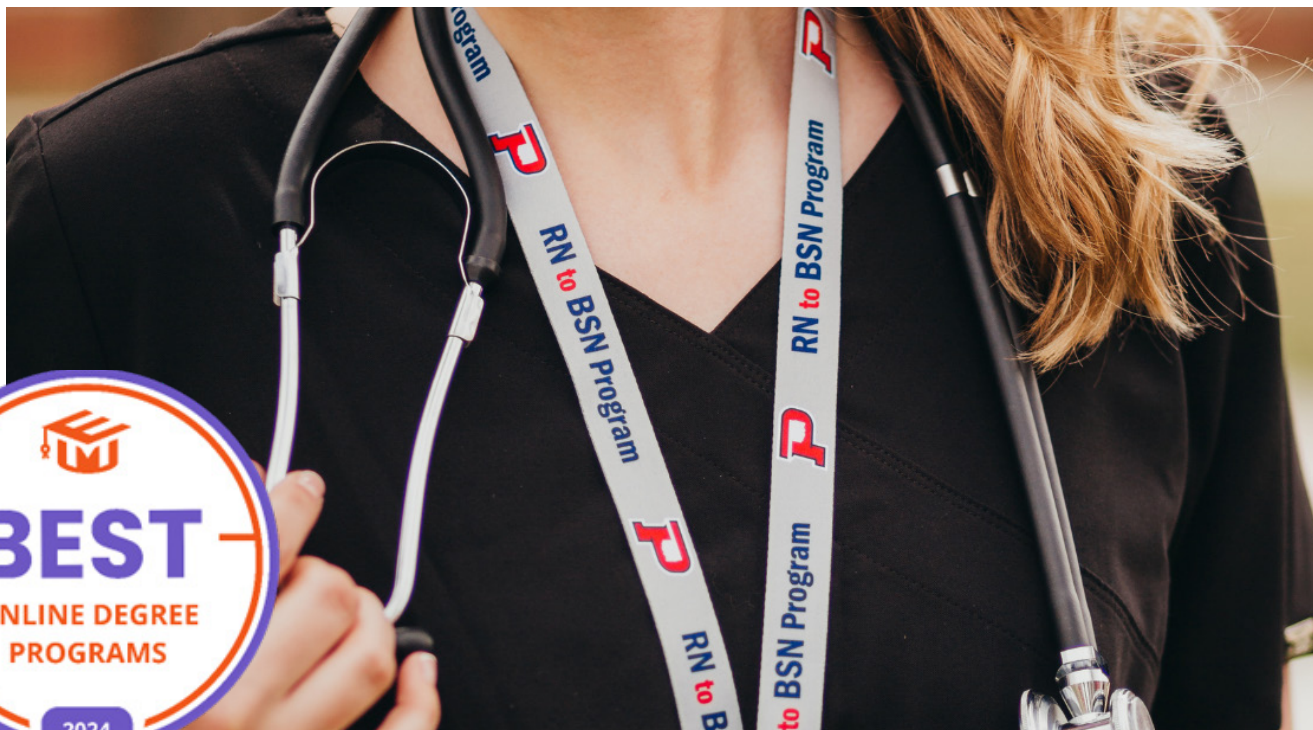
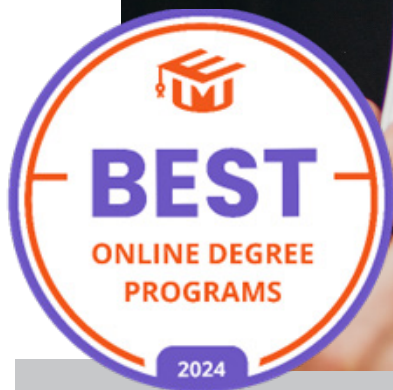
delivers strong economic mobility outcomes for our students. We take great pride in providing an affordable education and the resources necessary to empower our students to succeed, regardless of their background or financial means."

Additionally, 99 schools ranked in the top twenty percent tier are Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). OPSU's classification as an HSI is due to the twenty-six percent enrollment of Hispanic students. This achievement demonstrates the commitment OPSU has to helping students not only reach the finish line but also reap the benefits after graduating. OPSU stands as a leader in higher education, demonstrating its capacity to substantially impact the economic mobility of its students and the regions it serves.

For further details on OPSU's Tier 1 ranking on the Economic Mobility Index, please visit <https://www.thirdway.org/report/2023-economic-mobility-index>. **P**



THIRD WAY



NURSING

OPSU RN TO BSN NURSING PROGRAM

RANKED #1 ONLINE BRIDGE PROGRAM


Oklahoma Panhandle State University offers Oklahoma's No. 1 ranked online RN to BSN Bridge Nursing Programs. OPSU has emerged as the premier choice for aspiring nurses in Oklahoma. EduMed, a trusted source for healthcare education information, recently released rankings that position OPSU's program at the forefront of several prestigious categories. OPSU's RN to BSN program has been named the No. 1 Best Online RN to BSN Bridge Program in Oklahoma, No. 3 Best Online Nursing Program in Oklahoma, and No. 8 Most Affordable RN to BSN Online Program in the United States.

"The instructor-to-student engagement in our online RN to BSN Program is focused on a student-centered approach. Our stellar nursing faculty integrates their professional nursing experience and research into the classroom to bring course concepts to life. This extremely benefits our BSN students because they receive effective instruction that gives them confidence to apply their learning to the healthcare field.," stated Dr. Theresa Billiot, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs.

Known for its commitment to academic excellence, Oklahoma Panhandle State University continues to set high standards in education and affordability. This factor ensures aspiring nurses can pursue advanced education without significant financial burdens. By offering competitive tuition rates and various financial aid options, OPSU is dedicated to making quality education accessible to a diverse range of students.

Director of Nursing Dr. Megan D. Steele commented, "The program's online format allows students to balance their education with work and personal commitments, making it an appealing choice for busy nursing professionals."

Graduates of the RN to BSN Program have gone on to serve as nurse leaders in hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare specialties in Oklahoma. Graduates have also furthered their education with Master and Doctoral degree's further advancing the profession of nursing.

With these prestigious rankings from EduMed and a continued commitment to excellence, OPSU's RN to BSN nursing program is positioned to produce highly skilled and knowledgeable nursing professionals who will positively impact the healthcare landscape in Oklahoma and beyond. 



OPSU CHILI COOK-OFF BRINGS COMMUNITY TOGETHER

The Aggie Nation came together for a weekend of excitement, community engagement, and culinary delight at the 17th Annual OPSU Chili Cook-Off. The event was a success, showcasing the hard work of the Chili Cook-Off committee, the unwavering spirit of Aggie alumni, and the community.

Dr. Julie Dinger, University President, stated, "This year's Chili Cook-Off was one to remember. Thank you to the OPSU community for their support to make this year great."

The highlight of the event was the announcement of the chili cook-off winners, reflecting the cooking skills showcased by participants. The People's Choice award went to: 1st Place: Anchor D Bank, 2nd Place: Roger Edenborough, Tyler Bryant, and James Hager, and 3rd Place: Bank of the Panhandle. The Judges' Choice award was equally impressive, with winners as follows: 1st Place: Prestage Farms - Kelli Johnson and Patti Law, 2nd Place: Seaboard, and 3rd Place: OPSU's College of Arts and Education. Recognizing the artistry and creativity in presentation, the Best Presentation award was presented to: 1st Place: OPSU Cheer, 2nd Place: Images Art Club, and 3rd Place: Prestage Farms - Tommie Dale.

Vice President of Advancement, Dr. Ryan Blanton, commented on the importance of the event for the entire Aggie community. "This event brings together our alumni, who come back year after year to reconnect with their alma mater. It's a testament to the power of community engagement and the enduring ties that bind our alumni to OPSU."

In addition to the Chili Cook-Off, the weekend featured the "Guns and Hoses" event, which celebrated First Responder's Day with an obstacle course designed for law enforcement and fire personnel to battle against each other. This year, the "Guns and Hoses" trophy went to law enforcement. The weekend ended with an Aggie victory in Football.

Calandra Rose, the lead of the Chili Cook-Off committee, expressed her gratitude and enthusiasm. "The Chili Cook-Off is a labor of love, and it's heartwarming to see the smiles on the faces of our community members as they enjoy the delicious chili and vibrant atmosphere. I'm immensely proud of our committee and all the participants who contributed to the success of this event." **P**



“This year’s Chili Cook-Off was one to remember. Thank you to the OPSU Community for their support to make this year great.”

— Dr. Julie Dinger, University President



INTERSCHOLASTIC

COMPETITION BRINGS OVER 600 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM 54 SCHOOLS



The College of Agriculture, Science, and Nursing at OPSU hosted the 2023 Interscholastic Competition, celebrating FFA Excellence on the High Plains on November 13 and 14. The contest consisted of many events including livestock judging, agriculture mechanic, floriculture, meats, agriculture communications, farm business management, food science, crop identification, electricity, and a public speaking contest.

There were 54 FFA chapters present from Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, along with 1,600 competition entries in 22 career development events. OPSU students assisted in making this year's event seamless for every event and allowed them to learn leadership, teamwork, and agriculture knowledge.

"We would like to commend everyone for their dedication to fostering a positive and enriching environment for students to showcase their talents and skills," stated Dean Tracy Kincannon. "The diversity of participants and the wide range of career development events provided a platform for students to learn, grow, and connect with their peers from different regions."

The Department Head of Animal Science, Dr. Crystal Tolle, supervised the contests. She stated, "We would like to thank all of the sponsors, volunteers, judges, and everyone who contributed to the smooth functioning of the contest. Your efforts have undoubtedly impacted the participants, encouraging them to strive for excellence in their future endeavors." **P**

PARKER



OPSU'S LEADING GOAT TYER, SECURES FOUR CONSECUTIVE FIRST-PLACE FINISHES

In a remarkable achievement for the Central Plains Region, Junior Goat Tyer Parker McIntyre of Oklahoma Panhandle State University has clinched an unmatched four consecutive first-places finishes in this year's rodeo season. McIntyre's unprecedented winning streak has firmly established her as a trailblazer in collegiate rodeo, setting a new standard of excellence. Behind this record-breaking achievement lies a foundation of unwavering family support, unrelenting determination, and a deep-seated passion for the sport that has been with Parker her whole life.

Head women's rodeo coach at OPSU, Shelbie Rose, said of Parker's achievements, "Parker's exceptional success in the rodeo arena is a testament to her unwavering commitment, talent, and true cowgirl spirit she embodies, and it's a source of immense pride for all of us at OPSU. Parker's success highlights the values we work to instill in all our athletes, hard work, determination, and a love for the sport. We're thankful to have her as part of our rodeo family, and we're excited to watch her continue to compete as the season progresses."

McIntyre's journey in Goat Tying began at just five years old, a tradition passed down from her mother. Reflecting on her early days as cowgirl, Parker said "Rodeo has been a huge part of my family and goat tying has always been a favorite for the girls throughout the years." Parker's deep family roots in the sport have provided her with a strong foundation, firmly supporting her remarkable success in the rodeo arena.

For Parker, the thrill of competing lies in the balance between control and the adrenaline rush that comes with Goat Tying. She explains, "The more you practice, the more control you have in every situation thrown at you." Her dedication to honing her skills and maintaining composure in the face of challenging situations is a testament to her commitment to the sport.

Throughout her rodeo journey, Parker has faced her fair share of personal challenges, particularly the mental battle of overthinking every move. She notes, "Over the years,

one of the main obstacles I've had to overcome is the constant mental struggle of overthinking." She learned that genuine preparedness leads to instinctive reactions in the arena, a valuable lesson instilled by her father.

Looking ahead, Parker shares her aspirations, "My goals include winning our region in Goat Tying and hopefully following in my dad's footsteps and bringing a national title home from Casper." These goals not only reflect her commitment to personal excellence but also symbolize the strong legacy of rodeo success within her family, a legacy she's determined to continue. Parker's dedication and perseverance are set to drive her towards these goals, marking her as a rising star in the world of collegiate rodeo.

Parker is quick to acknowledge the invaluable support system that has stood by her throughout her journey. She expresses her gratitude, saying "I have to say I am extremely blessed in the supporters department." She extends her thanks to her father, Josh McIntyre; Ry Clark; Shelly Meier; her coach, Shelbie Rose; Cheyanne Bartling; her mother, Torri Dew; her grandparents; and all her amazing friends that have supported her throughout her collegiate career. "All these people have given me a million words of encouragement that I couldn't do without, and I can't express how much I appreciate it." With the season at its halfway point, McIntyre has faced tough competition from her fellow athletes. Her determination and grit along with her precision and speed have set her apart as one of the best in the region. Parker's focus and commitment to the sport have been evident at each rodeo so far this season. Her consistency in delivering outstanding performances has made her one to watch as the season progresses. **P**



OPSU MEAT JUDGING

WIN NATIONAL PLACEMENT FOR AMERICAN MEAT SCIENCE NATIONAL DIVISION

The OPSU Meat Judging Team competed at the Cargill High Plains Contest in Friona, Texas. This contest was the final outing for the American Meat Science National Division. It consisted of 10 placing classes, 5 sets of questions, and quality & yield grading of 15 Beef carcasses.

Senior, Makenzie Webster, excelled in the national competition, earning the title of National Champion Individual, signifying her as the best judge in the country for this year. She also received a \$1,000 Scholarship along with several other individual honors, including High Individual Overall, High Individual Beef Grading, High Individual Total Beef, 2nd place Individual Lamb Judging, 9th place Individual Pork Judging, 10th place Individual Placings, and 10th place Individual Questions.

"Receiving this individual award is a dream come true, and it's a testament to the countless hours of dedication and preparation I've put into meat judging. It's an incredible feeling to be recognized as the best judge in the country for this year, and I'm truly grateful for this honor," stated Webster.

Tracy Kincannon, Dean of the College of Agriculture, Science, and Nursing, stated, "Makenzie Webster's national excellence and the winning tradition of the OPSU Meat Judging Team stand as a testament to the remarkable talent and dedication within our college. This achievement not only showcases our commitment to excellence but also reinforces our position as a leading institution in the field of agriculture and meat science. Makenzie's title as National Champion Individual is a source of immense pride and inspiration for our academic community."

The OPSU Meat Judging Team received several awards, including High Team Beef Grading, 3rd place in Pork Judging, 3rd place in Total Placing, 5th place in Lamb Judging, 6th place in Beef Judging, 6th place in Questions, and 4th place Overall. The students who attended were Makenze Webster, JD Fox, Austin Jacobs, Elizabeth Ross, and Coach, Kathryn Hearn.

University President, Dr. Julie Dinger commented, "The OPSU Meat Judging Team has made a big impression on campus and in competition. I'm proud of Coach Hearn's leadership. She has taken a new program and brought out the best in our students in the classroom and in competition. Our faculty, staff, and students are what make our university great, and the Meats Judging Program is a perfect example of this."

Austin Jacobs was the recipient of the Rachel Hamilton Award. The Rachel Hamilton Award was established to honor a member of each team selected by their peers whose winning approach exemplifies Rachel's love of meats judging.

Kathryn Hearn, Meat Judging Head Coach, said, "This team is very special. Each of them went from knowing very little about meat judging, to competing at the national level. They had to trust a brand new faculty member to teach them the things they needed to know. Even with just the 4 of them, they proved to be very competitive. I am proud to have been a small part of their success. I look forward to what each of them will do in the future."

Individual achievements in the competition included JD Fox as the 5th place Individual Overall, 4th place Individual Questions, 5th place Individual Beef Judging, 7th place Individual Lamb Judging, 7th place Individual Pork Judging, and 10th place Individual Beef Grading; a 14th place Individual Beef Grading by Austin Jacobs; and a 14th place Individual Pork Judging and Placings by Elizabeth Ross. **P**



OPSU SHOW TEAM

SHINES AT MID-AMERICAN STOCK SHOW

The OPSU Show Team left its mark at the Mid-American Stock Show held in Hutchinson, KS, October 27 to 29. This show was open to exhibitors from across the nation, seeing participants from the midwestern and southern United States converge to compete in a showcase of livestock excellence. This year, OPSU proudly introduced its newly formed show team, showcasing their sheep flock genetics with six registered ewes of Shropshire and Hampshire breeds.

The OPSU Show Team's journey to the Mid-American Stock Show was not just about competition but also a unique educational experience. Throughout the semester, students were actively involved in their animals' daily care and preparation, providing them with hands-on learning opportunities. This practical experience complements their traditional education and adds valuable skills to their resumes, making them more competitive in the job market.

Dean Tracy Kincannon, for the College of Agriculture, Science, and Nursing, stated, "I am proud of the work that has come from the OPSU Show Team. This being their first year, they have hit the ground running, and I am ready to see what all they do. We are proud to continue the tradition of excellence in our college and look forward to many more achievements in the future."

The traveling team, consisting of Alya Arana, Bronk Embry, Claire Scheopner, Colby Perez, Grant Theurer, Kami Kornele, Keyly Jarret, Kreslyn Smith, Mya Martinez, Shelby Seabourn, and Karlee Callahan, demonstrated exceptional teamwork and expertise at the Mid-American Stock Show. Their results reflect the dedication and commitment they poured into this endeavor: Champion Pair of Hampshire Ewe (Bronk & Kami, Kreslyn & Alya), Champion Pair of Shropshire Ewes (Grant & Karlee, Colby & Shelby), Reserve Champion Pair of Shropshire Ewes (Mya, Claire & Keyly), Reserve Champion Hampshire Ewe (Bronk & Kami), Reserve Champion, Shropshire Ewe (Grant & Karlee), 3rd place January Hampshire Ewe Lamb (Kreslyn & Alya), 3rd place January Shropshire Ewe Lamb (Colby & Shelby), 4th place January Shropshire Ewe Lamb (Claire & Keyly), and 5th place January Shropshire Ewe Lamb (Mya).

"Our first stock show outing was very memorable and showcased the hard work that the team has put into their animals. This team is the true definition of collaboration and resilience," stated Cassidy Tolle-Johnson, Show Team Coach. "In its first year, the OPSU Show Team has joined 15 students from 4 states, all with different levels of livestock showing experience. I am very proud of the dedication that these students show to both OPSU and the livestock industry. I look forward to continuing to grow this program." **P**



PERFECT PAIRINGS

FUNDRAISER WAS A NIGHT OF COLLABORATION AND GENEROSITY

The Perfect Pairings Fundraiser now in its fifth year, has consistently been a beacon of collaboration, bringing professionals and students together with a shared vision of a prosperous future. This year's event was no different, with the OPSU McKee Library providing a perfect setting for showcasing culinary and literary pairings, the clubs' achievements, and fundraising for future competitions.

It is well-known that the technological advancements of tomorrow will greatly affect business, and thus, fostering connections between these two groups is crucial for our region's growth. The partnership between Future Technology Professionals and Panhandle Business Leaders was a testament to the power of collaboration.

These student organizations have proven to be invaluable in nurturing students' potential and equipping them with the skills they need for future success. These organizations offer experiential learning, provide opportunities to compete at regional and national levels, foster networking opportunities, and develop soft skills that are essential for a well-rounded professional.

Julie Johnson, OPSU student, FTP President, and PBL Secretary, spoke about her experiences with the organizations having a lasting impact on her overall confidence and sense of belonging.

By bridging the gap between classroom education and real-world applications, these student organizations offer invaluable experiences. They empower students to apply their knowledge in practical settings, fostering the development of skills that are highly sought after in the professional world. The event showcased how such initiatives are vital in shaping the leaders of tomorrow, providing them with the necessary tools to thrive in the competitive landscape of the modern workforce.

As we move into the future, it is essential to remember that progress is not achieved in isolation. By pairing knowledge, ideas, and resources, we can shape a world where technology and business work harmoniously to improve our lives and drive us toward a brighter tomorrow. The Perfect Pairings Fundraiser serves as a reminder of this truth and inspires us all to continue striving for progress, side by side.

CIS Department Chair and FTP Advisor Steve Martin commented, "The College of Business and Technology takes pride in teaching students critical thinking and soft skills so they can be successful in any career path they choose."

The evening culminated with an engaging auction featuring the culinary and literary pairings of the evening. The event raised over six thousand dollars for both organizations to use towards travel expenses for competitions. The national competition for FTP is scheduled for April 2024 in Shreveport, Louisiana. PBL will attend the state competition in March 2024, and qualifying participants will move on to nationals in June 2024 in Orlando, Florida.

If you would like to attend next year's event, please email perfectpairings@opsu.edu. The clubs are thankful for the community's generosity. If you would like to support the mission of these organizations, online donations may be made at: <http://tinyurl.com/PerfectPairings-OPSU> **P**



SHOOTING SPORTS

SUCCESS DURING FALL COMPETITIONS

The Shooting Sports Team at Oklahoma Panhandle State University has displayed exceptional talent during the fall semester, marking a series of wins across multiple competitions and events.

The team combines seasoned returnees and promising newcomers, demonstrating skill and leadership. The returning members are Austin Jacobs, Harrison Funderburk, Cameron Smith, Daniel Byers, Emily Robertson, John Lindley, Rhett Green, and Zach Willis. Trent Downey, Destry Roye, Tyler Davis, and Bjorn Genty joined the team this fall, adding a fresh perspective to the team's capabilities.

The fall semester saw the team's extensive travel to various competition destinations, including Hays, Kansas; Sparta, Illinois; Waco, Texas; and North Platte, Nebraska. In all the different settings and ranges, the OPSU Shooting Sports Team showcased their marksmanship, competing against top-tier opponents and exhibiting determination.

Collaborating with the OPSU Alumni Association during the Homecoming weekend, the team hosted and participated in the Panhandle Shootout. Emily Robertson secured the HOA Individual & HOA Female titles with an impressive score of 97, and Trent Downey claimed the HOA Male title with a score of 95. The team also won first-place positions in Trap and Skeet events, showcasing their collective strength and expertise.

In addition to their competitions, the team joined the College of Agriculture, Science, and Nursing to host the Interscholastic FFA Contest for high school students, fostering community engagement and sharing their passion for shooting sports.

Reflecting on the semester, Coach Dixon commented, "We had a tough start to our semester due to NCSSAA canceling our shoots, but we are hoping to make up for the loss in the spring semester. The team has done their best to work with what we have been dealt. I am looking forward to a very competitive spring semester!"

National Collegiate Champion for Division 4 Skeet, Emily Robertson, expressed her optimism for the upcoming season, stating, "I'm eager to continue pushing boundaries and working with this team to achieve greater heights. The setbacks have only fueled our determination, and I'm optimistic about what we can accomplish in the spring semester."

The OPSU Shooting Sports Team set their sights on the upcoming spring semester. They stand firm to build upon their successes, showcasing their commitment to excellence in the realm of shooting sports. **P**



RECOGNIZED AT STATE CAPITOL DURING INTERIM STUDY FOR CAPITAL NEEDS

Oklahoma Panhandle State University President Dr. Julie Dinger joined a panel of educational leaders to discuss the capital needs of regional and rural colleges and universities in the state during an interim study held on October 17 at the State Capitol. This study was held by Oklahoma House of Representatives Speaker Pro Tempore Kyle Hilbert and Minority Leader Cyndi Munson.

President Dinger's testimony before the House Higher Education & CareerTech Committee highlighted her commitment to improving the University's facilities and resources. The panel emphasized the crucial role that institutions play in preparing students for diverse careers and enhancing the economic development of local communities. During her presentation, President Dinger highlighted OPSU's relentless pursuit of external grants and partnerships with other entities to share costs, ensuring the university's ability to meet the evolving needs of its students and staff. She emphasized the importance of keeping students at the heart of our decision-making, especially as we work to keep higher education accessible and affordable for all.

President Dinger also highlighted the critical infrastructure upgrades and the challenges arising from unexpected cost increases, such as energy usage and property insurance. The university is contending with multiple increases in mandatory costs including property insurance and energy costs. President Dinger led the conversation about the unique challenges faced by rural higher education, especially with regards to the added time and costs associated with addressing capital needs for our rural colleges and universities. She asked for support from the Legislature to consider funds to help the University invest in facilities and infrastructure in ways that would reduce operating costs and ultimately save taxpayers money. President Dinger also highlighted OPSU's commitment to safety, accessibility, and technology upgrades to meet the evolving needs of students and staff.

"Thank you to Speaker Pro Tempore Hilbert and Minority Leader Munson for allowing me the opportunity to speak on this important subject. We are passionate about what we do, and we are so thankful you are willing to hear from us and what our capital needs are," stated President Dinger. **P**



SOCCER

CLOSED ITS 2023 SEASON WITH BOTH MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAMS

Oklahoma Panhandle State University wrapped up its 2023 season with both the Men's and Women's teams displaying resilience and determination.

The men's team, finishing the season with a 5-9-1 overall record and 1-8 in conference play, showcased their potential in various standout moments. A significant highlight was the early-season triumph against Division 2 Adams State on September 15, securing a memorable 1-0 victory with a masterful goal by Mauricio De Santiago. The Aggies also celebrated a notable Senior Day victory against Texas Wesleyan, with goals from David Vargas, Darrell Yetedj, and Frank Mutandi, showcasing their offensive prowess.

Looking ahead, the men's soccer program is optimistic about the future under the guidance of Head Coach Garrett Kull, who now has a full year to recruit and develop the team further. With key players set to return and the experience gained throughout the season, the Aggies are eager to build on this season's progress and return stronger in the coming year.

On the women's side, the Aggies concluded their 2023 season with a 2-13 (0-9) record, facing challenges but demonstrating resilience and strong teamwork. The season began with a blazing start, winning their first two games convincingly, including an 8-0 victory over Randall University and a 1-0 win against Sterling College.

Senior Goalkeeper Mya Szymanski played a crucial role in maintaining competitiveness, concluding her senior season with an impressive 91 saves and earning recognition on the 2nd Team All-SAC Goalkeepers for 2023. Szymanski's contributions throughout her four-year tenure with the Aggies have been significant, accumulating a total of 346 saves.

The Aggies bid farewell to other invaluable seniors, Nila Munoz, Regan Ake, Faith Cook, and Rebecca Herriotts, recognizing their substantial contributions to the program. Despite the challenges faced during the 2023 season, the women's soccer program at OPSU remains committed to building and growing both the program and its culture, expressing gratitude to departing seniors while looking forward to future successes in the seasons to come. **P**



SCORES FIFTH WIN OF THE SEASON ON SENIOR NIGHT AND FINAL HOME GAME

The OPSU Football team honored their ten outstanding seniors in a spectacular display of talent and determination in a thrilling football matchup against the Southwestern Assemblies of God University Lions. The Aggies came out on top with a resounding 46-29 victory, marking their fifth win of the season, an accomplishment the program hasn't achieved since 2018.

The Aggies' performance on the field was nothing short of extraordinary. They started the game on defense, and Alon Woodberry set the tone with an interception to give the Aggies possession. The offense capitalized on the turnover with a drive that culminated in CJ Campbell's 12-yard rushing touchdown at the 11:14 mark, followed by Alan Munoz's successful extra point.

The Aggies kept the momentum going, scoring on their third consecutive drive. CJ Campbell rushed for a 45-yard touchdown, and the extra point was good, bringing the score to 22-0 in favor of the Aggies. The remainder of the second quarter saw multiple punts from both teams, with the Aggies blocking SAGU's field goal attempt just before halftime.

In the third quarter, Alejandro Holguin's fumble recovery set the stage for another Aggies touchdown, this time by Brandon Stephens on a 12-yard rush. The Lions' fumbles continued, with Nathan Alvarado recovering one for the Aggies. OPSU capitalized on the turnover with another touchdown, as Brandon Stephens rushed for a 1-yard TD, extending their lead to 36-3.

Southwestern Assemblies of God University managed to find the end zone, scoring their first touchdown to make the score 36-9. However, the Aggies answered back with a 55-yard touchdown reception by Senior Ryan Acosta, extending their lead to 43-9.

SAGU continued to struggle, turning the ball over for the fifth time as Desmond Greene secured an interception for the Aggies. With just five minutes left in the game, Alan Munoz sealed the victory with a successful 30-yard field goal, bringing the score to 46-9.

The Lions displayed resilience and managed to score twice more in the final moments of the game, but it was not enough to overcome the Aggies' lead. The final score stood at 46-29 in favor of OPSU.

Head Coach Cory Miller expressed his pride in the seniors and the team's performance, stating, "These seniors welcomed us new coaches, they gave us 5 wins, the most in a while here. They need to enjoy this win and savor this moment. I could not be more proud of them."

The Aggies' ended the season with a loss to #19 Ottawa University Arizona. OPSU Football season record ends at 5-5. **P**



TEAM WRAPS UP 2023 SEASON WITH 2 ALL-CONFERENCE RECOGNITIONS

The OPSU Women's Volleyball team concluded its 2023 campaign with an overall record of 8-17; and 7-13 in conference play. The season showcased the Aggies' resilience and marked a notable improvement in the latter half of conference play.

The Aggies faced a challenging first half of the conference, finishing with a 2-8 record. However, the team demonstrated remarkable growth in the second half, finishing with a more balanced 5-5 record. A highlight of OPSU's season was a compelling five-game winning streak from October 13 to October 26.

In a memorable matchup against Langston, the Aggies set a record for the highest number of service aces in a single match among all SAC teams, tallying an impressive 18 aces. Kensey Clifton led the charge with an outstanding individual performance, contributing 9 aces in that particular game.

Bryanna Rosario stood out as a top server for OPSU throughout the season, ranking 8th in the conference in service aces. Tragically, Rosario's season was cut short due to injury, but her impact on the team was significant, averaging 0.4 aces per set and totaling 34 aces for the year. She also led the team in kills for the season with 182.

Joelle LaForce, the lone senior on the team, wrapped up her two-year Aggie career with impressive statistics, amassing 305 kills, 69 digs, and 76 blocks. Her leadership and contributions have been invaluable to the team's development.

OPSU Volleyball had two players recognized for their outstanding performances in the All-Sooner Athletic Conference teams. Mia Sanchez, who showcased versatility by playing setter and libero, earned All-SAC Honorable Mention as a setter. Sanchez ranked 10th in the conference in assists, averaging 5.16 assists per set and totaling 485 assists.

Middle blocker Alanah Best earned a well-deserved spot on the 2nd Team All-SAC. Best ranked 10th in the conference with an average of 0.77 blocks per set, accumulating a total of 76 blocks throughout the season.

Looking ahead, the Aggies are optimistic about the future under the leadership of Head Coach Nick Serowski. With a young and promising team, the focus is on continued development and recruiting to elevate the program's competitiveness in the seasons to come. **P**



BASKETBALL

AT OPSU BEGINS NEW ERA FOR BOTH THE WOMEN'S AND MEN'S TEAMS

The OPSU Athletics reveals schedule for the upcoming basketball season with a promising season filled with notable matchups and fierce competition. The Lady Aggies will host three home games this season.

Womens' Basketball Head Coach Greg Ray expressed his enthusiasm for the upcoming season and schedule, stating, "We're excited to get started! We have a revamped team built around young student-athletes of like minds. The OPSU fan base should be excited to watch their Lady Aggies compete. The team has adopted the phrase, 'Why not us!' They not only say it, but they believe it. Get your popcorn ready!"

The Lady Aggies have welcomed a total of 15 new athletes to complement their returning core of six players. This blend of fresh talent and seasoned veterans promises an exciting season ahead.

On the other hand, the Aggie Men's will host four home games this season with a new coach and roster. The team is made up of 2 returning players from last year's OPSU team, 7 incoming freshmen, and 5 transfers. OPSU Aggies fans eagerly anticipate the season's start and a new era

Head Men's Basketball Coach Charles Belt expressed his enthusiasm about the season ahead, saying, "It is time! We've been working and we are eager and excited to represent Panhandle State University in competition this season. We look forward to playing with pride and discipline while displaying our brand of basketball!"

In the SAC preseason poll, OPSU was selected 11th, which Coach Belt received with optimism. "As a team, I prepared our guys to see the release and expect to be selected dead last. Honestly we had a fun chuckle as a team when we saw we were selected 11th. The team graduated the top 2 scorers from last year; lost in graduation was also the Travis Grant award winner Rayquan Elliott, who led the country in points per game regardless of division; NCAA & NAIA. We are very young and I'm humbled and grateful to know based on the poll a couple coaches in our league respects what I've done as a head coach in the past, and expect us to be able to bring that to OPSU and the Sooner Athletic Conference. We look forward to seeing where we are once the dust settles at the end of the regular season." **P**



AGGIE WONDERLAND

NOVEMBER 27 – DECEMBER 31